(b) The Government has adopted National Policy on Older Persons, which *interalia* addresses the issues related to the legal, social, health problems of the elderly and development of inter-generational bonding.

(c) The Ministry is proposing to introduce the legislation during the current session of the Parliament.

Welfare schemes for poor

2233. SHRI TARIQ ANSWAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that about 25 per cent population in the country is still poor;

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking for improving the conditions of the poor; and

(c) what special projects Government have started or are going to start in future, for the welfare of the poor people ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN):(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has adopted a three pronged strategy to improve the living standard of the poor: (i) acceleration of economic growth with a focus on sectors which are employment intensive, (ii) human and social development through provision of basic minimum services; and (iii) targeted anti-poverty programmes.

(c) The government is running number of programmes including Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGYS), Indira Awas Yojana, Pradhan, Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP). In addition, the Government is implementing welfare schemes for the educational, economic and social empowerment of Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes.

Rehabilitation of mentally ill

2234. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the special efforts made by Government to encourage NGO's to take up services and rehabilitation for the persons with mental illness; and